

## ANALYSIS OF INTRA-RURAL MIGRATION IN OBUDU, CROSS RIVER STATE, NIGERIA

By

<sup>1</sup>Oko, P. E; <sup>2</sup>Anake, C. B.; F. A; <sup>3</sup>Udumo, B. O., <sup>4</sup>Abanyam, V. A. & <sup>5</sup>Odey, D. U.

<sup>1</sup>Department of Environmental Resource Management

Faculty of Environmental Sciences

University of Calabar, Nigeria.

<sup>2</sup>Department of Tourism Studies

Faculty of Social Sciences

University of Calabar, Nigeria.

<sup>3</sup>Department of Social Science Education

Faculty of Arts & Social Sciences

University of Calabar.

<sup>4</sup>Department of Vocational Education,

Faculty of Vocational and Science Education,

University of Calabar

<sup>5</sup>Department of Environmental Education,

University of Calabar

### ABSTRACT

This study sought to analyse intra-rural migration in Obudu, Nigeria's Cross River State. Specifically, the goals were to figure out what was going on in socio demographic profiles in the rural -urban migrants to Obudu urban, to identify the migrants' source areas or origin in the study area, to ascertain several socioeconomic factors influencing rural-urban migration in obudu, and to proffer solutions to Obudu's difficulties with rural-urban migration. The study adopted survey design where Purposive and simple random sampling techniques were used in the study with the use of questionnaires from 240 respondents drawn from the 8 wards of Obudu and who are participant in rural -urban migration in Obudu. Data were analyzed using percentages, tables, and frequency counts. According to the findings of the research, socio demographically the migrants were predominantly within the age cohort of 26-45 years and the males were more in number than the females. Furthermore, majority of the respondents were public/civil servants, as some were operating private businesses, and some engaged in schooling. Most of the migrants came from Obudu's rural districts such as Alege/Ubang, Angiaba/Begiaka, Utugwang North and Begiading. The least source area of the migrants was Ipong. The rural-urban migrants' socioeconomic motives of migration mainly included need to live closer to place of work, quest to seek for menial jobs, and for schooling. Other factors included to learn crafts and trade, and search for white collar jobs. The study therefore recommended among others, the need for the government to initiate efforts in the formulation and implementation of rural development policies that are geared towards holistic rural transformation that will reduce rural-urban migration, efforts to be made toward the extension

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of educational institutions, industries and government offices to the rural areas and establishment of cottage industries that make use of agricultural raw materials within the rural areas.

**Key words:** Migration, Intra – Rural, socioeconomic, Rural – Urban and Obudu.

### **Introduction**

The problem of migration has been a global issue of serious concern in Africa and most part of the western world. This is because it has piqued the curiosity of academics from a variety of fields, including demographers, inter-group relations analysts, geographers, and historians. Migration is seen as the voluntary, forced or impelled movement of an individual from one geographical location to another. It could be voluntary, forced or impelled. Obviously, certain factors account for migration, which include the push and pull factors. Pull factors refer to the determinants listed in the push factors but that are rather motivating factors for people to come and settle in an area. Push factors are social, economic, political, and physical factors that may compel an individual or group of people to migrate from a given geographical area. The considerable variance in social amenities' presence in areas described as rural or urban is the driving force behind it. These differences in space are the catalysts for change in the movement of people particularly from the rural to the urban areas in the quest for employment opportunities, improved living standard and educational pursuits (Atu and Abutunghe, 2018, Iwuanyanwu, Atu, Njoku, Ojoko, Itu and Erhabor, 2017; Aniah and Okpiliya, 2003). According to Omonigho and Olaniyan (2013), migration impacts the origin and destination areas. It has in no small measures retarded and reduced the developmental strides of the rural areas including agricultural, industrial to infrastructural developments (Mgbakor, Uzendu and Usifo, 2014).

As a result, it is instructive to observe that people will want to relocate from certain areas because of better opportunities elsewhere. According to Okpeh (2007), the combination of physical, economical, and political variables at the source and destination of migrants often underpins such migrations. It can be seen as emerging because of responses to development processes. Another feature of migration is that it takes place on two levels. Internal (local) and international (external) migration are examples of these. Internal migration, for example in Nigeria, refers to the movement of people from one community or settlement area to another within the territorial bounds of a geopolitical zone. International migration, on the other hand, refers to the movement of individuals beyond geopolitical borders. Rural-urban, rural-rural, urban-rural, urban-urban, and intra-rural/intra-urban migration streams are the most common. At any given time, all are present in a country, and occasionally even inside the same community. In a developing country such as Nigeria, rural-urban migrations appear to be of greater proportion compared to developed countries. This may be attributed to the impoverished and complex nature of these societies which seem to always precipitate people's desires to change locations in search of greener pastures and for survival reasons. Thus, people who tend to move from one place to another are the productive segment that represents the working population of the rural areas. Motivation for rural-urban migration appear to be

fundamentally for economic reasons such as employment or engage in economic activities while some social forces such as communal conflicts and fear of witchcraft could also influence rural-urban migration (Adewale, 2005). In most emerging societies, it is also seen as one of the key drivers of population change.

Both rural and urban areas are affected by rural-urban migration in terms of socioeconomics and development. It ensures the mobility of labour and its associated human capital between urban and rural areas with concomitant socioeconomic consequences between regions. Thus, socioeconomic development is associated with rural-urban migration (Todaro, 1984).

Rural-urban migration in Nigeria is a complicated and dynamic phenomenon (Adepoju, 1990) that has been the topic of numerous studies by researchers (UN Report, 2013, Aworemi, 2011, Adewale, 2005, Ogbuanya, 2000, 2000, Eboh, 2002, Sonik *et al.*, 2006, Iyarakpo, 2011). This research indicated a consistent pattern of migration from rural to urban areas without examining the trend from a socioeconomic perspective. As a result, the primary goal of this research is to look at the socioeconomic factors that influence rural-urban migration in Obudu, Nigeria. The following are/are some of the specific objectives:

1. To determine the socio-demographic profile of Obudu's rural-urban migration.
2. To identify the migrants source areas or origin in the study area.
3. To look at the socioeconomic elements that influence Obudu's rural-urban migration.
4. To proffer solution to the problems the migrants face

## **Literature review**

### **The concept of migration**

Migration is the temporary or permanent movement of people from one geographical region to another (short term or long term). Humans migrate because of changing circumstances, and the reasons for doing so vary from person to person depending on the circumstances that lead to the decision. Todaro (1984) conceptualized migration as the process whereby people move from one region to another in search of greener pastures. Individuals with certain economic, social, demographic, and educational traits are impacted by migration. According to the United Nations (2013), migration is defined as people moving from one area to another for at least twelve years, with the destination area being the new place of residence. According to the United Nations (2013), the phenomena are often voluntary and comprise mobility caused by socioeconomic, physical, or political causes. Migration, according to the International Organization for Migration (2014), is described as the movement of individuals or groups of individuals across international borders or inside a territory or state. It is a population movement that includes any type of human movement that varies in length, distance, and organization. This complicates classification into mutually exclusive subcategories even more, leading many scholars to categorize migration as either internal or external (local or international). In another dimension, the International Organization for Migration (IOM)

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(2014) defined migration as cross-border movements for the purpose of employment, whether permanent or temporary, and for the objectives of investment, employment, or business.

### **Rural-urban migration**

In Nigeria, West Africa, and Africa in general, there is a wealth of literature on rural-urban migration. According to the International Fund for Agricultural Development (2007) and Food and Agricultural Organization (2001) rural urban migration, according to the Aid American Development Agency (2000), is a major factor contributing to the acute scarcity of labor experience in rural areas, notably in Sub-Saharan Africa. Furthermore, Knight and Sang (2003) opined that agricultural activity which is the predominant source of livelihood in the rural areas require adequate labor supply, which is typically supported in Nigeria by capable young rural people. They did determine, however, that the continued exodus of this group from rural communities is followed by a substantial drop in the quantity of food, which is a major agricultural commodity. Adams and Adams (2007) backed up this claim by emphasizing the importance of human labor in the production stages, particularly in developing nations where automated agriculture is still in its infancy.

Other experts, on the other hand, believe that rural-urban movement considerably benefits rural development. Rural-urban migration is a livelihood strategy for both the migrants and the family they leave behind, according to a study done in Kenya's Nyamira District by Nyameri (2011). Rural-urban migration, she claims, is part of an economic diversification plan in which remittances are sent back to farming areas to assist mitigate risks in both subsistence and commercial agricultural enterprises.

Aworemi, Abdul-Azeez and Opoola (2011) carried out a study on the factors influencing rural – urban migration in Lagos Metropolis. In the study 15 local government areas were used out of the 20 local government areas that made up the Metropolis. Data was collected using pre-tested interview guide. The result of the study revealed that education, unemployment, inadequate social amenities in the rural communities, health reasons and avoidance of boredom in farming are the main factors influencing rural-urban migration in the study area.

Furthermore, Thet (2012) studied the pull and push factors of migration in Monywa Capital city of Northwest command in India, Myanmar and China trade route using a sample of 389 samples. Factor analysis was used to pick out the pull and push factors of migration. The results of the investigation revealed that improved living condition is the first most important factor with maximum percentage of variance that motivates the migrants to move to Monywa township while the second most important factor was better public service which was also a push factor because the reason for migration is that the level of services in their source area was poor.

Ajearo *et al.*, (2003) in their study on the effect of the impact of rural-urban migration on rural communities in Southeastern Nigeria led to the conclusion that rural-urban movement is a

survival strategy used by the poor, particularly those who live in rural areas. Because rural-urban migrants paid remittances for a variety of objectives, including agriculture, this is the case. Ekong (2003) held a similar viewpoint, claiming that migration provides migrants with more possibilities to learn new skills and extend their perspectives. Returning migrants, he added, bring cultural innovation and technical development to their homes. In their study of the socioeconomic implications of labor migration in Akpabuyo, Cross River State, Atu and Iwuanyanwu (2017) discovered that migrants make considerable contributions to their destination localities.

### **Theoretical framework: Everette Lee theory of migration**

Many theorists have followed in Ravenstein's footsteps, and today's prominent hypotheses are modifications of his conclusions. Ravenstein's approach was modified by Everette (1966) to emphasize internal causes. Lee also discussed how intervening circumstances affect the migration process. The 'push-pull' paradigm was developed in three ways by Everette Lee, a pioneer migration researcher.

Lee realizes that the location of the destination has both positive and negative aspects. As a result, there are two sets of "pull" and two sets of "push." Both at the origin and destination, the forces involved may be numerous and heterogeneous. He went on to say that there are hurdles and limits between the point of origin and the point of destination. Any two types of force are recognized by Lee's model (economic, social, environmental, political, and cultural). As a result, it is quite thorough, as it is a balance of push-pull at the origin, push-pull at the destination, and intervening variables.

As a result, this theory can be used to explain the socioeconomic factors that influence rural-urban migration in Nigeria's Obudu.

### **Research Methodology**

#### **Area of the study**

The study was conducted in Obudu Local Government Area of Cross River State's. The area lies between longitudes 805' and 9014' and latitudes 6022' and 6043' East of the Greenwich meridian and North of the equator, the Obudu Local Government Area is in Cross River State's northern axis. Benue State borders it on the north, Obanliku Local Government Area on the east, Boki Local Government Area on the south, and Bekwarra and Ogoja Local Government Areas on the west. The region covers roughly 1200km<sup>2</sup> of land and has an average elevation of about 1050m above sea level. Obudu Local Government Area had a population of 160,106 people according to the 2006 census. For 2020, the area has a projected population of about 238,335 people (National Population Commission, 2007). Obudu Local Government Area has its administrative headquarters at Obudu Urban I and II which has Atiekpe, Abonkip, Bebuabung, Bebuawhen, Bebuagam, Okambi and Ikwamikwu communities. There are 10 council wards in the local government area, which include Obudu Urban I, Obudu Urban II,

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Obudu has a tropical climate with two distinct district seasons: dry and wet. The wet season lasts from April to mid-November, while the dry season lasts from mid-November to mid-March, according to Oko and Okpiliya (2019). The area experiences average annual rainfall of 1300mm – 2000mm with two distinct vegetations – the Guinea savanna grassland and the rainforests. Sandy loam, sandy clay and loam, and sandy clay and loam are among the soil types present in the area. These soils are generally well-drained, and they range in fertility from fertile to poor fertility (Bisong, 2004). Agricultural activities are aided by these soils and climatic conditions. Subsistence and commercial agriculture are the mainstays of the people's livelihoods where over 75 percent of the people are involved. The area also offers opportunities for hunting animals such as bush pigs, glasscutters, antelopes etc. and small-scale fishing from the rivers, streams and the Obudu dam. Palm wine tapping is also carried out in Obudu. Crops cultivated in the area include yams, cocoyam, cassava, groundnut, rice, millet, plantain, maize, melon, beans and varieties of tree crops and fruit crops such as cocoa, orange, mango, pear, oil palm, bush mangoes, locust beans etc. The rich socio-cultural structures of Obudu people include the new yam festival, age group system, cultural dance troupes (Ikpatumana and Iwali (Queen Dance), marriages and funeral celebrations.

### **Population of the study**

The population of this study consisted of 240 males and females aged 16 and up are included in the study's population who are indigenes of Obudu local government area and are rural-urban migrants in Obudu, Cross River State. In this study, a total sample of 240 respondents was involved.

### **Sources of data**

Primary and secondary sources of data were used in this study. Questionnaire was provided to respondents who are rural-urban migrants and indigenes of the study area, and it was used to collect primary data. Secondary data was gathered from the National Population Census, publications, journals, textbooks, and conference reports, on the other side.

### **Sampling techniques and procedure**

The study adopted simple random sampling and purposive sampling procedures. Purposive sampling was employed to select 8 wards from the ten in Obudu LGA, and simple random sampling was utilized to distribute the questionnaire. In the selection process, the researcher went to Obudu Urban I and II where significant proportions of rural-urban migrants are found. Through rapport with the migrants, the researcher was able to meet and gather them together. The study's purpose was explained to them and asked for their permission to be part of the study. Afterwards, people who accepted to be part of the study went through the process of selection.

**Method of data collection**

The data for the study was gathered via questionnaires. The procedure includes researchers engaging research assistants and training them on how to distribute and administer questionnaires. After the training, the researcher and the assistants began the administration of the questionnaires by moving to the locations in person and administering the questionnaires, having face-to-face encounters with the respondents. Respondents were given a minimum of one day for completion of the questionnaire. The questionnaires were collected after the time limit had expired for presentation and analysis.

**Methods of data analysis**

The usage of descriptive statistics and analytical tables was used in the data analysis. To determine the frequency of respondents' opinions, percentages, means, and frequency distribution were employed.

**Presentation of Results and discussion**

The results and discussion are presented as follows.

Table 1: respondents' Socio-demographic profile

Profile	Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Age	16-25	56	23.3%
	26-35	70	29.2%
	36-45	64	26.7%
	46-55	38	15.8%
	56 and above	12	5.0%
	Total	240	100%
Sex	Male	144	60%
	Female	96	40%
	Total	240	100%
Marital status	Single	104	43.3%
	Married	124	51.7%
	Divorced	6	2.5%
	Widowed	4	1.7%
	Separated	2	0.8%
	Total	240	100
Level of education	Primary education	30	12.5%
	Secondary education	64	26.7%
	Tertiary education	86	35.8%
	No formal education	60	25.0%
	Total	240	100

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Major occupation		
Civil and public service	70	29.2%
Students	50	20.8%
Artisan	40	16.7%
Private business	60	25.0%
Others	20	8.3%
Total	240	100

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Source: Author's field work, 2021

On age distribution, the table showed that 56 (23.3%) of the respondents were between the ages of 16 and 25, while those between the ages of 26 and 35 were between the ages of 70 and 80. (29.2%) which constituted the majority of the respondents, those from the ages of 26-45 were 64 (26.7%) and came second, those within the age range of 46 – 55 were 38 (15.8%) of the respondents while those in the age bracket of 56 and above were 12 (5.0%) and were the least of the respondents in the study area. The dominance of migrants from the age bracket of 26 - 45 years seems to agree with the notion that most people who graduate from schools are eager for greener pastures in terms of employment. Few migrants at the ages of 56 and above imply that people have tendency to return to their villages when they are retired or old rather than old people moving to the urban areas for job. This finding partly agrees with UN (2003<sup>10</sup>) report which indicates that rural-urban migration is common among young people.

With regards to sex distribution, the table indicates that the males are more in number than the females which is 60%: 40% respectively. This means that males made up most of the responders, while females were in the minority. The fact that male migrants dominate this study shows that men are generally more prone to migrate in search of employment than females. In Nigeria, most men move to the urban areas to improve their socio-economic condition by leaving their families in the rural areas. Parts of the monies they make are sent back to their families as remittances to cater for their family needs. Women especially married ones may not be permitted by their spouse to travel to the urban areas to seek employment and provide for their families as men are supposed to take responsibility of catering for the family. This finding corroborates with Bello *et al.*, (2015<sup>15</sup>) findings indicating males are more likely than females to migrate.

In connection with marital status, it was revealed that 104 (43.3%) of the respondents were single representing the second highest of the migrants while 2(0.8%) were separated with least percentage. Furthermore, 124(51.7%) of the respondents were married representing the highest percentage while 6 (2.5%) were divorcees occupying the third position. On the other hand, 4(1.7%) of the respondents were widows occupying the fourth position. The data revealed married people with the highest percentage of migrants. This is so because married people who are unemployed may need to move to the urban areas to seek employment to be able to provide for their families. Singles occupy the second highest percentage of migrants. Singles are more likely to migrate to greener pastures. This finding agrees with Bello *et al.*, (2015). In the same

vein, the findings with regards to more married people migrating agrees with Adewale (2005) who found that most rural-urban migrants were married in Oyo State, Nigeria.

With regards to migrant’s level of education, it was found that 86 (35.8%) of the respondents had tertiary education and constituted majority of the respondents while those with secondary education were the second highest with 64(26.7%). Those with no formal education occupied the third position with 60(25%) of the respondents while those with primary education were the least with 30(12.5%) of the respondents. This implies that rural-urban migrants constitute mostly people who have attempted some level of education and are looking for employment to better their living condition.

In regards to occupation, majority of the respondents 70(29.2%) were employed in government ministries, this was followed by 60(25%) of the respondents who were operating private businesses, 50(20.8%) of migrants were students who occupied the third position while 40(16.7%) of the respondents were artisans occupied the fourth position and finally 20(8.3%) of the respondents represented others who are jobless, apprentices, sales assistants etc. came fifth. The dominance of civil and public servants in the study area is an indication that most people migrating to the area is because of their engagement in government jobs. In addition, an insignificant proportion of migrants in the study area are jobless. This finding disagrees with Bello *et al.*, (2015) who discovered that rising unemployment, which tends to put pressure on available jobs, is one of the most obvious concerns with rural-urban migration. The increase in the percentage of students is not unconnected with the quest for education in the Federal College of Education and other private colleges of Health Technologies and the school of Midwifery all located in Obudu urban. This finding is in tandem with IOM (2014) who discovered that seeking education in urban regions is one of the main causes for rural-urban migration.

**Table 2:** Rural-urban migration to Obudu urban from within Obudu LGA

S/ N	Migrant source area (wards)	Abonki p	Atiekp e	Bebuabun g	Bebuaga m	Bebuawhe n	Tota l
1.	Allege/Ubang	13	9	10	6	4	42
2.	Angiaba/Begiak	8	8	4	5	9	34
3.	Begiading	6	6	6	5	6	29
4.	Ipong	3	2	3	2	4	14
5.	Ukpe	10	6	7	6	4	33
6.	Utugwang North	10	10	6	5	5	36
7.	Utugwang Central	8	8	4	4	3	27
8.	Utugwang South	9	6	3	5	2	25
	Total	67	55	43	38	37	240

Source: Author’s fieldwork, 2021

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Table 2 identifies rural areas with number of rural-urban migrants within Obudu Local Government Area to Obudu urban. According to the results of the field survey, Ipong had the fewest migrants to Obudu urban from the Obudu Local Government Area, Alege/Ubang recorded the highest number with 42 migrants, 34 from Angiaba/Begiaka, 29 from Begiading, Ukpe had 33 migrants, Utugwang North, Utugwang central and Utugwang South recorded 36, 27 and 25 migrants respectively. The implication of this analysis is that all the eight wards of Obudu local government area outside the two urban areas have rural-urban migrants in Obudu urban.

This data indicates a pattern of intra- rural migration in the study area. It appears areas with closer proximity to the urban areas have fewer incidences of rural-urban migrants than areas that are farther from the headquarters of Obudu local government area which makes up the urban centers. This is reflected in the small numbers of migrants recorded from Ipong ward which borders the urban areas. This finding is in contrast with a study on human migratory pattern in Akpabuyo, Cross River State by Iwuanyanwu *et al.*, (2017<sup>2</sup>) which revealed that people showed tendency to migrate more to places nearest to them. Generally, the finding of the study showed that rural communities that are farther away from the urban areas found it more convenient to relocate to the urban areas. Such classes of migrants may be civil/public servants, businessmen and women as well as students in the tertiary institutions situated mainly in the urban areas of Obudu.

**Table 3:** Descriptive statistics of Rural-urban migration in Obudu, Cross River State, and socio-economic factors.

S/N	Variables	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Proximity to play of work	50	20.8
2.	Set up business	30	12.5
3.	Search for white collar jobs	38	15.8
4.	Learn craft work/trade	34	14.2
5.	Search for blue collar jobs	40	16.7
6.	Schooling	48	20.0
	Total	240	100

Source: Author's fieldwork, 2020

Table 3 displays the socioeconomic factors that influence rural-urban migration in Cross River State's Obudu Local Government Area. The table reveals that 50 (20.8%) which represents majority of the respondents were influenced by the desire to live closer to their places of work while migrants who were motivated by the desire to set up businesses were the least with 30(14.2%). There were 38(15.8 percent) rural-urban migrants who migrated to the cities in quest of white-collar jobs, the fourth highest percentage while those who moved to the urban centers for schooling had 48(20.0%) occupying the second highest percentage. On the other hand, migrants with the intension of getting trained in craft work and trade were 34(14.2%) occupying the fifth highest percentages while migrants who moved for purposes of acquiring a manual or blue-collar jobs were 40 (16.7%). From the foregoing analysis it is noted that

findings on the factors precipitating rural-urban migration in Obudu is centered around proximity to place of work by civil/public servants, Schooling, and the search for blue-collar work as a source of income indicate that labor is migrating from rural to urban areas.

This finding is consistent with Odey (2018 and Njoku, Itu and Erhabor, 2017) study, which indicated that one of the main reasons for rural-urban migration in Cross River State was the search for work, as well as participation in other economic activities, which was the primary cause for movement in the Calabar municipality. All the factors influencing rural-urban migration agree with the pull-push theory of Everette (1966).

### **Conclusion and recommendations**

Based on the findings of this research, it is concluded that socio demographically, intra-rural migrants in Obudu are dominated by persons within the age cohort of 26-45, male and female migrants, single and married and who have acquired secondary and tertiary education. In addition, most of the migrants are civil/public servants and operate private businesses while some are students in the tertiary and secondary institutions within the urban areas in Obudu. Furthermore, most of the migrants originated from Alege/Ubang, Angiaba/Begiaka, Utugwang North and Ukpe wards in Obudu Local Government Areas. The migrants' socio-economic motive of migration mostly included the need to live close to place of work, and quest for schooling as well as search for blue collar jobs to earn a living among other factors.

The following recommendations are made based on the findings of this study and the study's conclusion.

- i. Government should as a matter of necessity, initiate efforts in the creation and implementation of policies for rural development that are geared towards holistic rural transformation that will reduce the exodus of the rural populace to the urban areas in the study area.
- ii. Concerted efforts should be made by the government towards the extension of educational institutions, industries, and government establishments in the rural areas so as to curtail the number of persons migrating to the urban areas for employment and allied ventures.
- iii. Cottage industries that make use of agricultural raw materials should be sited in the rural area where such raw materials are produced. This will stem the rate of rural-urban migration in quest of industrial employment in the urban areas.

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